

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-5, 7, 8, and 10 are pending in the application. Claim 9 has been canceled.

Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)

The Examiner states that the information disclosure statement filed January 29, 2009 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3) because it does not include a concise explanation of the relevance.

In view of this, an English Abstract of JP3-97497 and JP57-96686 have been submitted herewith for Examiner's consideration.

Further, in the Advisory Action, the Examiner states that the IDS filed January 29, 2009 and June 6, 2009 will not be considered because a statement under 37 CFR 1.97(e) has not been submitted and a fee as required by 37 CFR 1.17(p) has not been paid.

In the IDS, Applicants have stated that references EP-0 668 388-A1; WO-2004/011710-A1; EP-0 781 881-A1; CH-662 804-A5; WO-2004/003280-A1; JP-2002-113288-A; JP-6-269592-A; JP-3-97497-A and JP-57-96686-A were cited in co-pending application 10/535,247.

Applicants have submitted, herewith, a letter making reference to copending application No 10/535,247 to draw Examiner's attention to the copending application. Therefore, Applicants believe that the statement under 37 CFR 1.97(e) and the fee are not required.

In view of this, the Examiner is respectfully requested to consider the references cited in the IDS, and initial and return the attached SB-08.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, because of some antecedent basis problems.

In view of this, claim 1 has been amended to provide an antecedent basis to overcome this rejection.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

(a) Claims 1, 3, 4, 9, and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hird (WO 01/071084) in view of Ando et al. (JP 2001-276484). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In the Advisory Action, the Examiner acknowledges that “Hird does not disclose water being added during the out of the correction process; however, this is merely intended use of the washing machine of Hird. . . . The further claimed limitations are considered to be intended use of the apparatus and are not further limiting in so far as the structure of the apparatus is concerned and would not be given patentable weight.”

In view of this, claim 1 has been amended to claim:1

an agitating unit that agitates the laundry in the laundry tub;

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a control unit that controls the water supply unit, the agitating unit, and the ion eluting portion, such that.

when no metal ion was supplied to the laundry tub prior to the spin-drying rotation, the control unit controls the water supply unit and the ion eluting portion to supply water containing no metal ion to the laundry tub, and controls the agitating unit to

perform agitation to perform a first balance correction rinsing, and
when metal ion was supplied to the laundry tub prior to the spin-drying rotation, the control unit controls the water supply unit and the ion eluting portion to supply water containing metal ion to the laundry tub, and controls the agitating unit to perform agitation to perform a second balance correction.

This feature is disclosed in page 37, line 10 - page 41, line 17 of the specification of the present application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that Hird discloses a sensing portion for detecting imbalances in the textiles and imbalance correction portion for controlling an imbalance correction operation, and Ando discloses an ion eluting portion for electrolytically adding silver ions to water for its antibacterial effects.

Hird discloses in Fig. 4, a flowchart that shows an out of balance correction process. More specifically, in step 200, a usual washing and rinsing operation of a wash cycle is performed (page 7, lines 12-13). At the end of the wash cycle, rinse water is pumped from the drum while the drum slowly rotates, and the drum then performs a distribute operation (step 202) in which the drum is rotated at a speed of around 83rpm (page 7, lines 14-16). When it is determined, in step 204, that the load is sufficiently balanced, a spin cycle at a higher speed is performed (step 206). If the load is judged not to be sufficiently balanced, then, in step 208, a redistribution operation occurs (page 8, lines 17-21). Note that Hird does not disclose that water is added during the out of balance correction process.

Ando discloses, in paragraph [0004], supplying silver ion, as washing water, during a final washing process (the rinsing process) among a plurality of washing processes.

In view of this, even assuming that Hird and Ando can be combined, which Applicants do not admit, one skilled in the art would, at best, modify Hird, such that silver ion, as washing water, is supplied during the usual washing and rinsing operation of a wash cycle (step 200), and would not conceive providing the foregoing claimed features of the present invention. In view of this, Hird and Ando, taken singly or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the “control unit,” as recited in claim 1.

Claims 3, 4, and 10, dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

Claim 9 has been canceled.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

(b) Claims 5, 7, and 8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hird in view of Ando, and further in view of Jeon et al. (USP 6,286,344). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 5, 7, and 8, variously dependent on claim 1, are allowable at least for their dependency on claim 1.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Conclusion

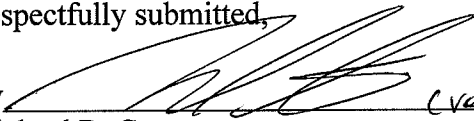
In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Maki Hatsumi Reg. No. 40,417 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 23, 2009

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

(11)Publication number : 03-097497

(43)Date of publication of application : 23.04.1991

(51)Int.Cl.

D06F 39/02

D06F 33/02

(21)Application number : 01-235015

(71)Applicant : MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC IND CO LTD

(22)Date of filing : 11.09.1989

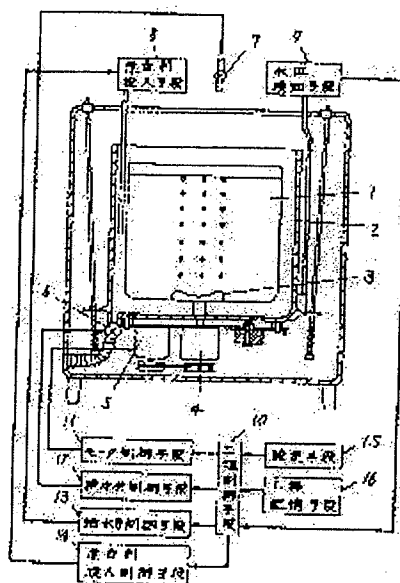
(72)Inventor : FUJII HIROYUKI
HAMAKAWA ETSUZO

(54) WASHING MACHINE

(57)Abstract:

PURPOSE: To produce an effective bleaching original to a bleaching agent without exercising an adverse influence on clothes and a detergent by a method wherein a bleaching agent charging means effects charging operation at a point of time when a given amount of water is fed at a rinsing process and when an agitating blade is operated, and thereafter a given soaking time is set.

CONSTITUTION: When a washing process is completed, a rinsing process is entered, drainage of washing liquid at a washing process is effected, and thereafter dehydration is performed. After completion of dehydration, the feed of water for rinsing is effected. At a point of time when it is detected by a water level detecting means 9 that a given amount of rinsing water is fed, a signal is outputted from a process control means 10 to a motor control means 11 to run a motor 5. Running of the motor causes rotation of an agitating blade 3 through a reduction mechanism 4 to effect agitation of rinsing water and clothes in a washing drum 1. After the start ing of agitation, a signal is outputted from the process control means 10 to a bleaching agent charge control means 14 to drive a bleaching agent charge means 8. This constitution prevents reaction of the bleaching agent itself to a detergent component for cloths and produces an effect originally possessed by the bleaching agent.



English Translation of Relevant Portion of JP-(S)57-96686

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A water level of a washing tub 2 can be adjusted by a shaft 10a for adjusting a water level. Control is performed whereby the higher the water level is set, the faster and longer a motor 4 rotates. This prevents the laundry from being damaged, and helps reduce water to be supplied and power to be consumed.

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